

## The Century: America's Time Episode 2, Shell Shock (1914-1919) Study Guide

- 1). Why is this episode called Shell Shock? What does the term mean? When and how did it come into use?
- 2). A German U-boat sank the *Lusitania* off the Irish Coast. Despite the knowledge of a war waging in the Atlantic, passengers chose to sail in these waters. Why did the passengers of the *Lusitania* have a false sense of security?
- 3). Discuss some of the causes of World War I.
- 4). Why was World War I different from all previous wars? How was this war truly a product of the new century?
- 5). The automobile is one of the most influential machines of the twentieth century. How did the automobile change American life in the early years of the century?

- 6). How did propaganda shape American views of World War I? How has propaganda shaped American views and mores during other twentieth century events?**
- 7). The years 1915-1940 saw the great African-American migration, when millions of African-Americans migrated from the South to the North. How did World War II help foster this massive migration? How did this migration affect life in both the South and the North?**
- 8). Discuss the futility of the Battle of the Somme.**
- 9). What were some of the causes of the Russian Revolution? What were the ramifications of this revolution for world events in the twentieth century?**

**The Century: America's Time**  
**Episode 3, Boom to Bust (1920-1929)**  
**Study Guide**

- 1). **Broadway is one of the most famous boulevards in American. Why is Broadway known as the Great White Way?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 2). **How did Prohibition help increase the presence of organized crime in America?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 3). **Discuss how the culture of the 1920s broke and transgressed different boundaries in American society, especially the accepted roles for women.**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 4). **The media has had a tremendous influence on the twentieth century. What were the effects of the mass media on the 1920s?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 5). **The 1920s saw a burgeoning of African-American culture and talent, centered in the Harlem section of New York City. Discuss the contribution of the Harlem Renaissance to American art and literature.**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 6). **Discuss some of the social tenets of the Harlem Renaissance.**

- 7). In the 1920s, for the first time in the country's history, more Americans lived in an urban setting than a rural one. Discuss the process of urbanization and how it affected the country.**
- 8). Compare rural and urban areas in the 1920s.**
- 9). Discuss the role of advertising in the 1920s.**
- 10). Discuss some of the changes for women in the 1920s.**
- 11). How did the Scopes trial illustrate the clash between science and religion that was a hallmark of the early century?**

**The Century: America's Time**  
**Episode 4, Stormy Weather (1929-1936)**  
**Study Guide**

- 1). **What was the Bonus Army? What were its demands? How did the Bonus Army exemplify the frustration of the American people during the Great Depression?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 2). **The Great Depression was the most severe economic crisis in American history. What were some of the causes of the Great Depression?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 3). **Almost everyone in the country felt the effects of the Great Depression. How did the depression affect average Americans?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 4). **Even though the economy failed, many Americans blamed themselves for their unemployment and hard times. Why did so many unemployed Americans blame themselves?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 5). **People still went to the movies in droves despite the hard times of the depression. Why did the motion picture industry continue to thrive when most other businesses failed?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 6). **What was the Dust Bowl? How did it exacerbate the Great Depression?**

- 7). Why did more Americans join the Communist Party in the 1930s than any other time?
- 8). Adolf Hitler and the Nazi party came to power during the German depression. Why were Hitler and Nazism so appealing to Germans in the 1930s?
- 9). How did Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the president during the Great Depression, use radio to help restore American confidence in their government and the economy?
- 10). Was FDR's New Deal radical? Why or why not?
- 11). What finally ended the Great Depression?
- 12). What is the legacy of the Great Depression?

**The Century: America's Time  
Episode 5, Over the Edge (1936-1941)  
Study Guide**

- 1). **Germany hosted the 1936 Summer Olympics. How did Hitler use the 1936 Olympics to promote his Nazi Party?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 2). **American Jesse Owens' stunning victory in the 100-meter race angered Adolf Hitler. How did Owens' victory shatter the Nazi propaganda about Aryan supremacy?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 3). **Franklin Delano Roosevelt was a master of the media. How did he use the media to do battle in the Great Depression? How did he use the media to rally support during World War II?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 4). **Discuss the impact of radio on American history and American culture in the twentieth century.**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 5). **How did Adolf Hitler use propaganda and the media to achieve his desired goals?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 6). **In the late 1930s, the Nazi Party in Germany burned books. Why did they do this? How can books be considered such a threat that some might find it necessary to burn them?**

- 7). **What were the Nuremberg Laws? How did they affect the Jewish population of Germany and German-occupied states?**
- 8). **World War II was not the first time anti-Semitism reared its ugly head. Discuss the history of anti-Semitism in Europe.**
- 9). **England and its Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, seemed to appease Hitler. Why did they choose this passive strategy?**
- 10). **What was Kristallnacht? What prompted this show of Nazi aggression?**
- 11). **Why did the United States refuse to let the *St. Louis* dock in the United States and allow its passengers to emigrate?**



**The Century: America's Time**  
**Episode 6, Civilians at War (1941-1945)**  
**Study Guide**

- 1). **Why were there so many civilian casualties in World War II?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 2). **It can be argued that Adolf Hitler has had the most impact of any one person in the twentieth century. Discuss some of the goals and plans of Adolf Hitler to dominate the world. How might the world be different today if Germany had won World War II?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 3). **Why did Hitler attempt to eliminate all the Jews of the world?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 4). **The atrocities committed against the Jewish people in World War II are among the most horrific ever imagined. Why were German soldiers willing to commit these atrocities for their country and their leader?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 5). **Why did Heinrich Himmler, chief of Hitler's Gestapo, search for a more efficient method of killing Jews instead of continuing to shoot them?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 6). **What was the Final Solution?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 7). **How could the Holocaust have happened?**

- 8). Although the odds were against survival in the death camps, some managed to live. How could these people survive against such overwhelming odds?
- 9). Compare Japanese and German racial ideology.
- 10). How were Japanese soldiers acculturated to being killing machines? How do states remove the burden of murder from the shoulders of its soldiers?
- 11). Who were the kamikaze?
- 12). Compare and discuss the immorality of all the participants of World War II.
- 13). Should the United States have dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima? Explain your answer.
- 14). What did the Nuremberg Trials accomplish?

**The Century: America's Time  
Episode 7, Homefront (1941-1945)  
Study Guide**

- 1). Japan bombed Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Why did Japan bomb Pearl Harbor?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 2). How did the American people react to the bombing of Pearl Harbor?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 3). What is a citizen soldier? Why does the United States have a particular history of citizen soldiers?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 4). Discuss the transition from a peacetime economy to wartime economy that occurred in the United States during World War II.**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 5). Women workers increased dramatically during the war. Why was there resistance at first to women working in war plants?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 6). Why were women accepted in the defense industries after some initial reservations and resistance?**

- 7). **World War II was not fought on American soil. Nevertheless, the impact of the war was tremendous. How did World War II alter the American homefront?**
- 8). **How did the United States use propaganda to unify the American people behind the war effort?**
- 9). **Why were Japanese-Americans banished to internment camps? Why weren't German-Americans or Italian-Americans interned? Why is this one of the greatest civil rights violations in American history?**
- 10). **Discuss the impact of Frank Sinatra on American culture during World War II.**
- 11). **Discuss the impact of D-Day on the course of the war.**
- 12). **Discuss the impact of FDR's death.**

**The Century: America's Time  
Episode 8, Best Years (1946-1952)  
Study Guide**

- 1). What is the difference between a hot war and a cold war?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 2). Winston Churchill coined the famous phrase "Iron Curtain". What did he mean by it?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 3). The U.S. Government granted returning soldiers the GI Bill of Rights. What was the GI Bill of Rights? How did this bill of rights shape the coming decades?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 4). What was the Baby Boom? How did it change America? What are the effects of this boom today?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 5). Although the post-war economy was the most prosperous in American history, some Americans were excluded. How did the prosperity and economic advantages of the period exclude most African-Americans and women?**

- 6). **Discuss the devastating losses Europe suffered in the war and their effects during the post-war period.**
- 7). **Discuss the ideological conflicts and differences between the United States and the Soviet Union.**
- 8). **What was the Marshall Plan? How did it shape post-war U.S. foreign policy?**
- 9). **What was the American reaction to the Soviets obtaining nuclear power?**
- 10). **Why was there such a different reception for Korean War veterans than World War II veterans?**
- 11). **What was a blacklist? How did political witch-hunts result in these lists?**

**The Century: America's Time  
Episode 9, Happy Daze (1953-1960)  
Study Guide**

- 1). **Dwight David Eisenhower enjoyed immense popularity when he was president between 1953 and 1961. What was Ike's appeal? Why was he so popular?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 2). **The 1950s witnessed the most prosperous economy in American history. How did this prosperity transform the country?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 3). **Discuss gender roles in the 1950s. Why were these roles so rigid? How have these roles changed? How have they remained similar?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 4). **Television became part of almost every American home in the 1950s. What was the impact of television on 1950s culture?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 5). **Why was television so popular? How has the role of television in American society changed? How has it remained the same?**

- 6). **Rock-n-roll debuted in the 1950s and caused consternation among some of the older generation. Why were traditionalists so concerned about the effects of rock-n-roll?**
- 7). **Discuss the impact of Elvis Presley on American culture and American music.**
- 8). **Discuss the impact of the Baby Boom. How did this boom fuel rock-n-roll and the youth culture of the 1950s?**
- 9). **What is an icon? Discuss the impact of some of the icons of the 1950s.**
- 10). **African-Americans chose the 1950s as the decade to change the system of segregation. How did Martin Luther King, Jr. become the leader of this Civil Rights Movement?**
- 11). **Discuss the events that happened at Central High School in Arkansas. What was the impact for the rest of the nation?**



**The Century: America's Time**  
**Episode 10, Poisoned Dreams (1960-1964)**  
**Study Guide**

- 1). In 1960, in Greensboro, North Carolina, young African-American students demonstrated against segregation by sitting at luncheon counters that only served white patrons. Why were some white Americans, especially in the South, so opposed to integration?
  
- 2). How could young African-Americans be influenced to take action to stand up for their beliefs, especially with regard to the civil rights movement?
  
- 3). The early 1960s were unique in that it was truly a youth culture. Discuss some ways in which this is evident.
  
- 4). John F. Kennedy was one of America's most popular presidents. Why was JFK so popular? What was his special appeal?
  
- 5). Discuss the role of television in the 1960 presidential election. How does television influence the political scene today?

- 6). ***Psycho* was one of the most popular movies of the early 1960s and remains a cult classic to this day. Why was this movie so popular?**
- 7). **Why did the Soviet Union erect the Berlin Wall?**
- 8). **Who were the Freedom Riders? What were their objectives? How are they true American heroes?**
- 9). **Discuss the power of song in the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s.**
- 10). **How did JFK's death affect America? What was the impact of this national loss?**
- 11). **Why was JFK's assassination the day America "lost its innocence?"**

**The Century: America's Time  
Episode 11, Unpinned (1965-1970)  
Study Guide**

- 1). Why did the *New York Times* call the 1964 World's Fair "a glimpse of the future?"
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 2). In 1964, three civil rights workers, Michael Schwerner, Andrew Goodman and James Chaney were murdered. How did their murder help to mobilize the Civil Rights Movement?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 3). The era of student protest began at University of California, Berkeley. What prompted these student protests?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 4). How and why did the United States get involved in the Vietnam War?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 5). Why was the Vietnam War different than any other type of war previously fought by the United States?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 6). In the mid-1960s, the Civil Rights Movement began to splinter into separate factions. Why did the movement splinter?

- 7). **Compare the ideologies and techniques of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X.**
- 8). **Analyze and discuss the music of the 1960s and its influence on the youth culture.**
- 9). **How was the counterculture symbolic of the generational conflicts in America in the 1960s?**
- 10). **The actions of the Women's Liberation Movement broke many of the gender boundaries and taboos of earlier eras. How did the Civil Rights Movement influence this movement?**
- 11). **Discuss the role of television in the Vietnam War.**
- 12). **Discuss the class antagonisms of the Vietnam War and the war protests.**

**The Century: America's Time**  
**Episode 12, Apocalypse Now (1970-1974)**  
**Study Guide**

- 1). **Richard Nixon became president in 1969. Why was Nixon such a poor choice for the divided nation?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 2). **Who were the "silent majority"?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 3). **In 1970, National Guardsmen killed four students at Kent State University. How did the killings at Kent State epitomize the destructive divide in America?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 4). **What are identity politics? Are they empowering or are they divisive?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 5). **American soldiers were better equipped, better fed and in better health than the Vietnamese soldiers. Yet, the American soldiers were not able to defeat the Vietnamese. Why were the Vietnamese soldiers so resilient?**

- 6). **Nixon's crowning achievement as president was his trip to China. Why was his trip to China so monumental?**
- 7). **Discuss some of the problems Vietnam veterans had adjusting to American society when they came home. Why did they have so many problems?**
- 8). **Why was Watergate such a scandal? How did it bring down the president of the United States?**
- 9). **Discuss the impact of the Watergate scandal on the American public, American confidence and American history.**
- 10). **How did the inability of the United States to defeat North Vietnam reveal cracks in the seemingly impenetrable military might of the country?**
- 11). **How did the fall of Saigon end an era?**

**The Century: America's Time**  
**Episode 13, Starting Over (1976-1980)**  
**Study Guide**

- 1). In 1976, America celebrated its 200th birthday. Why was the Bicentennial celebration so important to America? Why was it so necessary?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 2). Why was America's prestige, nationally and internationally, at an all-time low?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 3). The 1970s is known as the "Me Decade". Why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 4). In 1976, Georgia governor and peanut farmer Jimmy Carter became president of the United States. What was the appeal of this unlikely presidential candidate?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 5). The 1970s were a time of political apathy. What caused this political apathy and malaise? Why had the American voters lost confidence in their government and leaders?

- 6). **America in the 1970s experienced a severe energy crisis. Discuss how this crisis affected the American economy and society.**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 7). **Incidents like Love Canal in upstate New York and the battles over forced desegregation by bussing in Boston showed America fraying at the edges. How did the government react to these crises?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 8). **In 1978, Dan White, a disgruntled city employee in San Francisco, murdered mayor George Moscone and openly gay city supervisor Harvey Milk. How did these murders help to advance the Gay Liberation Movement?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 9). **Iranian students held Americans hostage for over 400 days in the late 1970s. Why was Iran so anti-United States?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 10). **Ronald Reagan won the presidency in 1980 and became one of America's most popular presidents. What was the appeal of this former actor?**



**The Century: America's Time  
Episode 14, A New World (1981-1989)  
Study Guide**

- 1). Why does Peter Jennings call the 1980s "A New World"?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 2). What was unique about the 1980s? How did this decade differ from the 1970s or the 1990s?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 3). The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall was dedicated in 1982 amidst controversy and protest. Why was the Wall controversial?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 4). Why do people leave mementos and trinkets at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 5). America elected Ronald Reagan to the presidency in 1980. What was the appeal of this man? Why was Reagan one of the most popular presidents of the twentieth century?**

- 6). A devastating new drug, crack cocaine, made its appearance in the 1980s. What were the effects of this drug, particularly in urban areas?
- 7). What were the principles of Reaganomics? Did these economic policies work?
- 8). Discuss the impact of personal computers in the 1980s on American life and culture.
- 9). In 1986, the space shuttle *Challenger* exploding killing the entire crew and a New Hampshire teacher, Christa McAuliffe. What was the impact of this terrible tragedy?
- 10). Television and religion blended together in the 1980s with the rise of televangelism. What was the appeal of televangelism? What happened to some of the leading televangelists of the decade?
- 11). Discuss the discovery and evolution of the AIDS epidemic in America. How did this disease change American social habits?

